

(12) PATENT
(19) AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE

(11) Application No. AU 200047229 B2
(10) Patent No. 732683

(54) Title
Self sealing firestop coupling assembly

(51)⁷ International Patent Classification(s)
E04B 005/48 F16L 005/04
E04B 001/94 H02G 015/04
F16K 017/38

(21) Application No: 200047229

(22) Application Date: 2000.07.13

(30) Priority Data

(31) Number	(32) Date	(33) Country
09/369106	1999.08.05	US

(43) Publication Date : 2001.02.08

(43) Publication Journal Date : 2001.02.08

(44) Accepted Journal Date : 2001.04.26

(71) Applicant(s)
Kenneth R. Cornwall

(72) Inventor(s)
Kenneth R Cornwall

(74) Agent/Attorney
PHILLIPS ORMONDE and FITZPATRICK, 367 Collins Street, MELBOURNE VIC 3000

(56) Related Art
US 4623170
US 5649713
US 2956822

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A firestop coupling assembly (10 or 210) for allowing the passage of utility members (50 or 52) through a penetration in a partition (54 or 56) while preventing the transmission of fire and smoke through the penetration. The coupling assembly includes an outer sleeve (12 or 212) and an inner conduit (16 or 216). The outer sleeve has a concentric indentation (12D or 212D) around its inner surface within which is mounted an intumescent material (20 or 220). In one (1) embodiment, the inner conduit is mounted in the open top end of the outer sleeve so that the second end (16B or 216B) of the inner conduit is adjacent the intumescent material. In another embodiment, the inner conduit is adjustable along the length of the outer sleeve. A plug (22 or 222) can be provided in at least one end of the inner conduit allowing passage of at least one (1) utility member through the assembly. In another embodiment, the inner diameter of the inner conduit is only slightly greater than the outer diameter of the utility member so that the utility member can be solvent welded to the inner surface of the inner conduit. When the coupling assembly is exposed to heat, the intumescent wrap expands into the inner passageway of the outer sleeve and prevents the transmission of smoke and fire through the coupling assembly.

5

10

15

20

25

AUSTRALIA

Patents Act

**COMPLETE SPECIFICATION
(ORIGINAL)**

Application Number:
Lodged:

Class Int. Class

Complete Specification Lodged:
Accepted:
Published:

Priority

Related Art:

Name of Applicant:

Kenneth R Cornwall

Actual Inventor(s):

KENNETH R CORNWALL

Address for Service:

PHILLIPS ORMONDE & FITZPATRICK
Patent and Trade Mark Attorneys
367 Collins Street
Melbourne 3000 AUSTRALIA

IP Australia

Documents received on:

13 JUL 2000

Melbourne

Batch No:

Invention Title:

SELF SEALING FIRESTOP COUPLING ASSEMBLY

Our Ref : 620949
POF Code: 340393/56978

The following statement is a full description of this invention, including the best method of performing it known to applicant(s):

SELF SEALING FIRESTOP COUPLING ASSEMBLY

5 The present invention relates to a self sealing coupling assembly which allows for the passage of utility members through partitions of a structure such as floors or walls while preventing the transmission of fire and smoke through the coupling assembly. In particular, the present invention relates to a self sealing coupling assembly which includes an intumescent material adjacent one end which expands to fill the inner passageway of the coupling assembly such as to block the inner passageway to prevent the transmission of fire and smoke
10 through the inner passageway of the coupling assembly.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

15 The present invention provides a firestop coupling assembly to allow utility members to pass through a partition of a structure and to prevent transmission of fire and smoke through the partition of the structure, which comprises: an outer sleeve having an open first end and an open second end with a sidewall having an outer surface and an inner surface extending therebetween and forming an inner passageway along a longitudinal axis; and
20 inner conduit having an open first end and an open second end with a sidewall having an outer surface and an inner surface extending therebetween and forming an inner passageway having a longitudinal axis, wherein the second end of the inner conduit is mounted in the first end of the outer sleeve such that the longitudinal axis of the outer sleeve is co-axial with the longitudinal axis of
25 the inner conduit; an intumescent material mounted in the inner passageway of the outer sleeve adjacent the second end of the outer sleeve wherein when the intumescent material is heated above a predetermined temperature, the intumescent material expands to fill the inner passageway of the outer sleeve.

30



Further, the present invention provides a method for allowing utility members to pass through a floor of a structure while preventing transmission of fire and smoke through the floor of the structure, which comprises the steps of:

- 5 providing a firestop coupling assembly which includes an outer sleeve
having an open first end and an open second end with a sidewall having an
outer surface and an inner surface extending therebetween and forming an
inner passageway along a longitudinal axis; an inner conduit having an open
first end and an open second end with a sidewall having an outer surface and
an inner surface extending therebetween and forming an inner passageway
10 having a longitudinal axis, wherein the second end of the inner conduit is
mounted in the first end of the outer sleeve such that the longitudinal axis of the
outer sleeve is co-axial with the longitudinal axis of the inner conduit; an
intumescent material mounted in the inner passageway of the outer sleeve
adjacent the second end of the outer sleeve wherein when the intumescent
15 material is heated above a predetermined temperature, the intumescent
material expands to fill the inner passageway of the outer sleeve;

mounting the coupling assembly in the floor of the structure which
includes:

- 20 (i) securing the outer sleeve of the coupling assembly to a portion
of the partition;
(ii) providing a cover for the open first end of the inner conduit;
(iii) placing the cover on the open first end of the inner conduit;
(iv) pouring concrete around the coupling assembly and allowing
the concrete to harden to form the floor; and
25 (v) removing the cover and inserting the plug into the first end of
the inner conduit wherein when the outer sleeve of the coupling
assembly is exposed to heat above a preset temperature, the
intumescent material expands to close the inner passageway of
the outer sleeve and sealingly expand around the utility
30 members extending through the coupling assembly such that
smoke and fire are unable to move past the intumescent
material in the inner passageway of the outer sleeve.



In a broad aspect, the present invention therefore provides a firestop coupling assembly which is used with one or more utility members having a variety of different diameters where the intumescent material in the outer sleeve of the coupling assembly expands to crush the utility members or to surround the utility members so as to prevent the transmission of smoke and fire through the utility members or through the coupling assembly around the utility members.

The firestop coupling assembly of the present invention allows for the passage of utility members through a penetration in a partition such as a floor, ceiling or wall of a structure while preventing the transmission of fire and smoke through the penetration. The coupling assembly includes an outer sleeve and an inner conduit. The outer sleeve has a concentric indentation around its inner surface within which is mounted an intumescent material. In one (1) embodiment, the inner conduit is mounted in the open, top end of the outer sleeve so that the second end of the inner conduit is adjacent the intumescent material. In another embodiment, the inner conduit is adjustable along the length of the outer sleeve. A plug can be provided for at least one end of the inner conduit. The plug has at least one (1) opening to allow passage of at least one

20

20



(1) utility member through the assembly. In another embodiment, the inner diameter of the inner conduit is only slightly greater than the outer diameter of the utility member so that the utility member can be secured to the inner surface of the inner conduit. The inner surface of the inner conduit can be tapered toward a center of the inner conduit. This allows the use of a utility member having two pieces which are inserted from the top and bottom of the assembly. In use, the coupling assembly is mounted in a penetration in a floor, wall or ceiling of a structure. The utility members are then passed through the coupling assembly. If several utility members are used or if the outer diameter of the utility member is smaller than the inner diameter of the inner conduit, a plug is first provided in the first or second end of the inner conduit to hold the utility member or members in position. In addition, an initial blank plug having no openings may be inserted into the inner conduit prior to use of the assembly. When utility members are to be passed through the assembly, the blank plug can be replaced with a plug having the correct openings. Alternatively, the opening can be made in the blank plugs. When the coupling assembly is exposed to heat, the intumescent material expands into the inner passageway of the outer sleeve and prevents the transmission of smoke and fire through the assembly.

The substance and advantages of the present invention will become increasingly apparent by reference to the following drawings and the description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a top view of the coupling assembly 10 showing the openings 24 in the plug 22.

Figure 2 is a side view along the line 2-2 of Figure 1 showing the coupling assembly 10.

Figure 3 is a cross-sectional view along the



line 3-3 of Figure 1 showing the utility members 50 extending through the coupling assembly 10.

Figure 4 is a side view of an alternate embodiment of the plug 222 having a partial cross-sectional view showing the ribs 224A on the inner surface of the opening 224 of the plug 222.

Figure 5 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the coupling assembly 210 showing the inner conduit 216 extending completely through the outer sleeve 212.

Figure 6 is a cross-sectional view of the second embodiment showing the inner conduit 216 extending completely through the outer sleeve 212.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Figures 2 and 5 show the coupling assemblies 10 and 210 of the present invention. Each of the coupling assemblies 10 and 210 includes an outer sleeve 12 and 212 and an inner conduit 16 and 216. The outer sleeve 12 and 212 has an essentially cylindrical shape with an open first end 12A and 212A and an open second end 12B and 212B with a sidewall 12C and 212C extending therebetween forming an inner passageway 14 and 214 along the longitudinal axis A-A and B-B of the coupling assembly 10 and 210. The outer surface of the sidewall 12C and 212C of the outer sleeve 12 and 212 is also provided with a concentric ring 12D and 212D at the first end 12A and 212A and a mounting flange 12E and 212E at the second end 12B and 212B. The mounting flange 12E and 212E is provided with holes 12F and 212F to allow for securing the coupling assembly 10 and 210 to a concrete form (Figure 1). The inner passageway 14 and 214 of the outer sleeve 12 and 212 has a first portion 14A and 214A adjacent the first end 12A and 212A of the outer sleeve 12 and 212 and a second portion 14B and 214B adjacent the second end 12B and 212B of the outer sleeve 12 and 212.



In the preferred embodiment, the diameter of the first portion 14A and 214A of the inner passageway 14 and 214 of the outer sleeve 12 and 212 is less than the diameter of the second portion 14B and 214B such that a shoulder 14C and 214C is formed between the first portion 14A and 214A and the second portion 14B and 214B (Figures 3 and 6). The diameter of the first portion 14A and 214A is preferably only slightly greater than the outer diameter of the inner conduit 16 or 216. The difference in the diameters of the first and second portions 14A and 214A and 14B and 214B is dependent on the diameter of the first portion 14A and 214A and the diameter of the inner conduit 16 and 216. The greater the diameters of the first portion 14A and 214A and inner conduit 16 and 216, the greater the amount of intumescent material 20 or 220 which is needed to fill the inner passageway 18 and 218. Consequently, the greater the diameter of the first portion 14A and 214A, the greater the difference in the diameters of the first and second portions 14A and 214A and 14B and 214B which allows the second portion 14B and 214B to accommodate a greater amount of intumescent material 20 or 220.

In one (1) version of either embodiment, the outer sleeve 12 and 212 has a length of 2.25 inches (5.72 cm). The first portion 14A and 214A preferably has a length of 0.75 inches (1.91 cm) and the second portion 14B and 214B preferably has a length of 1.50 inches (3.81 cm). The diameters of the first portion 14A and 214A and second portion 14B and 214B of the inner passageway 14 and 214 vary depending on the outer diameter of the inner conduit 16 and 216. Table 1 shows the diameters for the various diameter inner conduits 16 and 216 in inches.



TABLE 1

Inner conduit	First portion	Second portion
2.0"	2.75"	3.01"
3.0"	4.00"	4.70"
4.0"	5.00"	6.18"

The inner conduit 16 and 216 has a cylindrical shape with an open first end 16A and 216A and an open second end 16B and 216B having a sidewall 16C and 216C therebetween forming the inner passageway 18 and 218 of the inner conduit 16 and 216. In a first embodiment of the coupling assembly 10, the inner conduit 16 is mounted in the outer sleeve 12 such that the second end 16B of the inner conduit 16 extends into the first end 12A of the outer sleeve 12 along only the first portion 14A of the inner passageway 14 of the outer sleeve 12 (Figure 3). The outer surface of the inner conduit 16 at the second end 16B is secured to the first portion 14A of the inner passageway 14 of the outer sleeve 12. In a second embodiment of the coupling assembly 210, the inner conduit 216 extends completely through the outer sleeve 212 (Figure 6). The inner conduit 216 is secured along the first portion 214A of the inner passageway 214 of the outer sleeve 212 after the inner conduit 216 is correctly positioned in the outer sleeve 212. The length and positioning of the inner conduit 216 in the outer sleeve 212 is dependent on the type and thickness of the partition 56 in which the coupling assembly 210 is to be mounted. The coupling assembly 210 of the second embodiment is preferably used in a similar context as the coupling assembly described in my U.S. Patent No. 5,293,724. In both embodiments, the inner conduit 16 and 216 is preferably secured to the inner passageway 14 and 214 of the outer conduit 12 and 212 by any well known means such as solvent welding. Alternatively, the inner conduit 16 and 216 and outer



sleeve 12 and 212 can be constructed as a unitary piece.

At least one (1) strip of intumescent material 20 or 220 is mounted in the second portion 14B and 214B of the inner passageway 14 and 214 of the outer sleeve 12 and 212. The intumescent material 20 or 220 preferably extends the entire length of the second portion 14B and 214B. The amount of the intumescent material 20 and 220 which extends into the inner passageway 14 and 214 or the thickness of the intumescent material 20 and 220 is preferably dependent on the positioning of the inner conduit 16 and 216 in the outer sleeve 12 and 212. In the first embodiment, where the inner conduit 16 extends only into the first portion 14A of the inner passageway 14 of the outer sleeve 12, the thickness of the intumescent material 20 is such that the inner diameter of the second portion 14B of the inner passageway 14 with the intumescent material 20 is less than the inner diameter of the first portion 14A and the outer diameter of the inner conduit 16. Preferably, the inner diameter of the second portion 14B of the inner passageway 14 with the intumescent material 20 is essentially equal to the inner diameter of the inner conduit 16. In the second embodiment, where the inner conduit 216 extends completely through the outer sleeve 212, the intumescent material 220 is of a thickness such that the diameter of the first portion 214A and the diameter of the second portion 214B with the intumescent material 220 are essentially the same. The greater the diameter of the inner passageway 214 of the outer sleeve 212, the thicker the intumescent material 220. In both embodiments, the intumescent material 20 or 220 may be constructed of more than one (1) intumescent strips secured to together. The intumescent material 20 or 220 is preferably constructed of an expansion material 20A spaced between two (2) outer coatings 20B. The expansion material 20A is preferably constructed of



expandable graphite produced by the chemical or electrolytic treatment of high-grade crystalline flake graphite. The outer coatings 20B are preferably constructed of elastomeric material. In the preferred embodiment, the intumescent material 20 or 220 is similar to intumescent wrap strips manufactured by Zero International located in Bronx, New York.

In both embodiments, the inner diameter of the inner conduit 16 and 216 is dependent on the type and number of utility members 50 or 52 to be passed through the coupling assembly 10 and 210. Where there are several utility members 50 or 52, the inner diameter of the inner conduit 16 and 216 is such that the utility members 50 or 52 can be easily inserted through the coupling assembly 10 and 210. In the preferred embodiment, where a single utility member 50 or 52 is passed through the coupling assembly 10 and 210, the diameter of the inner conduit 16 and 216 is only slightly greater than the outer diameter of the utility member 50 or 52 such that the utility member 50 or 52 can be secured to the inner surface of the inner conduit 16 and 216. Alternatively, in the second embodiment, the inner surface of the sidewall 216C of the inner conduit 216 is tapered such that a two (2) piece utility member 52 can be mounted in the coupling assembly 210 (Figure 6). The inner surface of the sidewall 216C of the inner conduit 216 can also be provided with an inner lip 219. The inner surface of the sidewall 216C is tapered such that the inner diameter of the inner passageway 218 of the inner conduit 216 decreased as it extends from the first and second end 216A and 216B of the inner conduit 216 inward toward the inner lip 219. In the preferred embodiment, the diameter of the passageway 218 of the inner conduit 216 is the same at each end 216A and 216B. Preferably, the diameter of the passageway 218 of the inner conduit 216 adjacent each side of the inner lip 219 is also the same. In one (1)



embodiment, the diameter of the passageway 218 adjacent each end 216A and 216B of the inner conduit 216 is 2.390 inches (6.071 cm) and the diameter of the passageway 218 adjacent each side of the inner lip 219 is 2.370 inches (6.020 cm). The tapering of the inner surface of the sidewall 216C of the inner conduit 216 and the inner lip 219 allow the first and second pieces 52A and 52B to be inserted into the first and second end 216A and 216B, respectively of the inner conduit 216 to the correct depth and allows the pieces 52A and 52B to be secured to the inner surface of the inner conduit 216. Preferably, the utility members 52 are secured to the inner conduit 216 by solvent welding. However, it is understood that any other well known method of securing the pieces 52A and 52B to the inner conduit 216 can be used.

A plug 22 and 222 is preferably provided in the open first end 16A and 216A of the inner conduit 16 and 216 of the first embodiment and the open first end and/or second end of the inner conduit in the second embodiment. The plug 22 and 222 acts to hold the utility members 50 or 52 in place in the inner conduit 16 and 216 of the coupling assembly 10 and 210 when there are several utility members 50 or 52 or when there is a single utility member and the outer diameter of a utility member 50 or 52 is less than the diameter of the inner passageway 18 and 218 of the inner conduit 16 and 216 such that the utility member 50 or 52 can not be secured to the inner surface of the inner passageway 18 and 218 of the inner conduit 16 and 216. The plug 22 and 222 preferably has a top portion 22A and 222A and a bottom portion 22B and 222B (Figure 3). The plug 22 and 222 is mounted in the open first end 16A and 216A or open second end 16B and 216B of the inner conduit 16 and 216 such that the bottom portion 22B and 222B extends into the inner passageway 18 and 218 of the inner conduit 16 and 216. The diameter of the bottom portion 22B and 222B is such that the bottom portion 22B and



222B can be easily inserted into the open first end 16A and 216A of the inner conduit 16 and 216. The outer surface of the bottom portion 22B and 222B of the plug 22 and 222 is preferably provided with at least one (1) rib 22C and 222C. The rib 22C and 222C acts to hold the plug 22 and 222 in place in the open end of the inner conduit 16 and 216. The diameter of the top portion 22A and 222A of the plug 22 and 222 is preferably similar to the outer diameter of the inner conduit 16 and 216. The top portion 22A and 222A prevents the plug 22 and 222 from being completely inserted into the inner passageway 18 and 218 of the inner conduit 16 and 216 and allows for easier removal of the plug 22 and 222. The plug 22 and 222 is preferably constructed of 60 durometer PVC, elastomer.

In the one (1) embodiment, where there are several utility members 50 extended through the coupling assembly 10 or 210, the plug 22 has openings 24 to allow the insertion of the utility members 50 into the coupling assembly 10 or 210 (Figure 1). The openings 24 are preferably of a diameter only slightly greater than the diameter of the utility members 50. The inner surface of the openings 24 is preferably provided with ribs 24A which help to hold the utility members 50 in position in the plug 22 and in the coupling assembly 10 or 210.

In an alternative embodiment, where a single utility member 50 is passed through the coupling assembly 10 or 210, the plug 222 has a single opening 224 (Figure 4). The plug 222 preferably has an extension 222D surrounding the opening 224 extending upward from the top portion 222A of the plug 222 away from the bottom portion 222B of the plug 222. A clamp 226 is preferably provided around the outer surface of the extension 222D such that the diameter of the opening 224 in the extension 222D can be reduced to grip the utility member 50 and hold the utility member 50 in



place:

IN USE

5 The coupling assemblies 10 and 210 of the present invention are used to prevent the transmission of fire and smoke through penetrations in partitions 54 and 56 of structures such as in floors, ceilings and walls while allowing for the passage of utility members 50 or 52 through the partitions 54 and 56. In the first
10 embodiment, the coupling assembly 10 is mounted in the partition 54 such that the first end 16A of the inner conduit 16 is flush with one (1) side of the partition and the open second end 12B of the outer sleeve 12 is flush with the other side of the partition (Figure 3).
15 In one (1) version of the first embodiment, the coupling assembly 10 is mounted in a concrete floor. To mount the coupling assembly 10 in a concrete floor, the mounting flange 12E of the outer sleeve 12 is secured to a form (not shown) for the concrete floor. Preferably, the inner conduit 16 is secured in the outer sleeve 12
20 prior to the mounting of the outer sleeve 12 to the form. Next, a cap (not shown) is placed over the open first end 16A of the inner conduit 16 and concrete is poured around the coupling assembly 10. The cap is removed from the inner conduit 16 after the concrete has formed and the coupling assembly 10 is cast-in-place in the concrete floor. The coupling assembly 210 of the
25 second embodiment is intended to be mounted on a corrugated deck and embedded in a concrete floor (Figure 6). The mounting of the coupling assembly 210 of the second embodiment is similar to that described in my U.S. Patent No. 5,293,724.

30 Once the coupling assembly 10 or 210 is mounted in the partition 54 or 56, the plug or plugs 22 or 222, if used, is placed in the open first end 16A and 216A or open second end 16B and 216B of the inner conduit 16 and 216. Preferably, the plug 22 or 222 is



chosen with the specific number and size of openings 24
 or 224 needed for each utility member 50. In one (1)
 embodiment (not shown), an initial blank plug having no
 opening is inserted into the inner conduit 16 or 216
 prior to use of the coupling assembly 10 or 210. When
 the utility member 50 is to be passed through the
 coupling assembly 10 or 210, the blank plug is replaced
 with a plug 22 or 222 having the correct number of
 openings 24 or 224. In another embodiment (not shown),
 the openings are made in the blank plug. Once the plug
 22 or 222 is in place, the utility members 50 are
 inserted through the openings 24 or opening 224 in the
 plug 22 or 222 and extended completely through the
 coupling assembly 10 or 210. The plug 22 or 222 is
 positioned such that the openings 24 or opening 224 in
 the plug 22 or 222 are parallel to the axis A-A or B-B
 of the coupling assembly 10 or 210. The plug 22 or 222
 acts to keep the utility members 50 aligned in the
 coupling assembly 10 or 210. In the embodiment with
 multiple openings 24, the diameter of the openings 24 is
 such that the openings 24 hold the utility members 50 in
 place and prevent the utility members 50 from falling
 out or completely going through the coupling assembly
 10. The ribs 24A in the openings 24 of the plug 22 form
 a seal around the utility members 50 to prevent water,
 smoke and fire from passing through the coupling
 assembly 10 between the openings 24 and the outer
 surface of the utility member 50. In the alternate
 embodiment, where the plug 222 has a single opening 224
 and is used with a single utility member 50, the utility
 member 50 is extended through the opening 224 in the
 plug 222. The opening 224 can be provided with ribs
 224A to hold the utility member 50 in the plug 222 and
 to form a seal around the utility member 50. Once the
 utility member 50 is correctly positioned in the
 coupling assembly 210, the clamp 226 around the
 extension 222D on the plug 222 is tightened. By



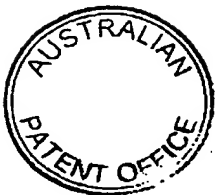
5 tightening the clamp 226, the extension 222D forms a
 seal around the utility member 50 and acts to hold the
 utility member 50 in place in the coupling assembly 10
 or 210 and to prevent water, smoke and fire from passing
 through the coupling assembly 10 or 210 between the
 opening 224 and the outer surface of the utility member
 50. The extension 222D and clamp 226 can be used in
 combination with the ribs 224A on the opening 224 or by
 themselves. The extension 222D and clamp 226 allow a
 10 single plug 222 having a standard size opening 224 to be
 used with a variety of utility members 50 having
 different diameters. The plug 22 or 222 on the first or
 second end 16A or 216A or 16B or 216B of the inner
 conduit 16 or 216 also helps prevent the spread of smoke
 15 and fire through the coupling assembly 10 or 210 by
 providing a seal in the first end 16A or 216A and/or
 second end 16B or 216B of the inner conduit 16 or 216.
 The plug 22 or 222 also acts as a watertight seal to
 prevent water from leaking through the coupling assembly
 20 10 or 210. The plug 22 or 222 also helps to reduce pipe
 noise by absorbing sound vibrations within the pipe.
 Once assembled and mounted in the partition 54 or 56,
 the coupling assembly 10 or 210 is used to prevent the
 transmission of smoke and fire through the penetration
 25 while allowing the passage of utility members 50 through
 the partition 54 or 56.

30 The coupling assembly 10 or 210 can also be
 used without a plug 22 or 222 when a single utility
 member is intended to extend through the coupling
 assembly 10 or 210. In this embodiment (not shown), the
 utility member 50 has an outer diameter only slightly
 less than the inner diameter of the inner conduit 16 or
 216. The securing of the utility member 50 to the inner
 surface of the inner conduit 16 or 216 forms a seal
 35 between the inner conduit 16 or 216 and the utility
 member 50 and prevents fire and smoke from passing
 through the coupling assembly 10 or 210 around the



outside of the utility member 50. In another embodiment, the utility member 52 is constructed of two (2) pieces 52A and 52B (Figure 6). In the first embodiment, the first piece 52A is inserted into the first end 16A of the inner conduit 16 and the second piece 52B of the utility member 52 is inserted into the second end 12B of the outer sleeve 12. In the second embodiment, the first piece 52A is inserted into the first end 216A of the inner conduit 216 and the second piece 52B is inserted into the second end 216B of the inner conduit 216. In the second embodiment, the inner surface of the sidewall 216C of the inner conduit 216 is tapered such that the pieces 52A and 52B of utility member 52 are inserted into the coupling assembly 210 to a point where the inner diameter of the inner conduit 216 is less than the outer diameter of the pieces 52A and 52B of the utility member 52. The inner passageway 218 of the inner conduit 216 is also preferably provided with an inner lip 219 such that the ends of the pieces 52A and 52B of the utility member 52 abut against the inner lip 219 when the pieces 52A and 52B are full in place in the inner conduit 216. Both pieces 52A and 52B are preferably secured in the inner conduit 216.

Once installed in the partition 54 or 56, the coupling assembly 10 or 210 acts in response to heat to prevent the passage of fire and smoke through the coupling assembly 10 or 210. In use, when the intumescent material 20 or 220 in the outer sleeve 12 or 212 of the coupling assembly 10 or 210 is heated beyond a preset or predetermined temperature, the intumescent material 20 or 220 expands. In the preferred embodiment, the preset temperature is approximately 250°F (121°C). As the intumescent material 20 or 220 expands, the sidewall 12C or 212C of the outer sleeve 12 or 212 prevents the material 20 or 220 from expanding outward and forces the material 20 or 220 to expand inward to close off the inner passageway 14 or 214 of



the outer sleeve 12 or 212. The outer sleeve 12 or 212 and the inner conduit 16 or 216 are preferably constructed of a high temperature, fire rated poly vinyl resin such as PVC such that the outer sleeve 12 or 212 and inner conduit 16 or 216 do not melt or collapse when heated beyond the preset temperature. The material used to construct the outer sleeve 12 or 212 and inner conduit 16 or 216 also preferably allows the transfer of heat to the intumescent material 20 or 220 to be greater than if the intumescent material 20 or 220 were encased only in concrete. When heated, the intumescent material 20 or 220 preferably converts into a very bulky material and tends to cling to itself and completely seals off the inner passageway 14 or 214 or the outer sleeve 12 or 212.

In one (1) embodiment, where a single utility member 52 is formed by two (2) pieces 52A and 52B solvent welded in the coupling assembly 10 or 210, the utility member 52 preferably collapses when heated beyond the preset temperature and the intumescent material 20 or 220 expands into the inner passageway 14 or 214 of the outer sleeve 12 or 212 around the collapsed utility member 52.

In another embodiment, where there are several utility members 50 or a single, one (1) piece utility member having a diameter smaller than the diameter of the inner passageway 18 or 218 of the inner conduit 16 or 216, the intumescent material 20 or 220 expands and surrounds the utility members 50 and seals the inner passageway 16 or 216 around the utility members 50.

It is intended that the foregoing description be only illustrative of the present invention and that the present invention be limited only by the hereinafter appended claims.

It is understood that, throughout the description and claims of this specification, the word "comprise" and variations of the word, such as "comprising" and "comprises", is not intended to exclude other additives or components or integers or steps.



The claims defining the invention are as follows:

- 5 1. A firestop coupling assembly to allow utility members to pass through a partition of a structure and to prevent transmission of fire and smoke through the partition of the structure, which comprises:
- 10 (a) an outer sleeve having an open first end and an open second end with a sidewall having an outer surface and an inner surface extending therebetween and forming an inner passageway along a longitudinal axis;
- 15 (b) an inner conduit having an open first end and an open second end with a sidewall having an outer surface and an inner surface extending therebetween and forming an inner passageway having a longitudinal axis, wherein the second end of the inner conduit is mounted in the first end of the outer sleeve such that the longitudinal axis of the outer sleeve is co-axial with the longitudinal axis of the inner conduit;
- 20 (c) an intumescent material mounted in the inner passageway of the outer sleeve adjacent the second end of the outer sleeve wherein when the intumescent material is heated above a predetermined temperature, the intumescent material expands to fill the inner passageway of the outer sleeve.
- 25 2. The assembly of claim 1 wherein a lower conduit is secured in the open second end of the outer sleeve such that one end of the lower conduit is adjacent the second end of the inner conduit.
- 30 3. The assembly of claim 1 or claim 2 including a plug having at least one opening extending through the plug and mounted in the first end of the inner conduit to close the open first end of the inner conduit such that a longitudinal axis of the opening is parallel to the longitudinal axis of the inner conduit wherein the plug has an extension on a first surface of the plug extending outward away from the inner conduit, wherein the extension surrounds the



Y:\water\No delete\47229-00.doc

opening in the plug and wherein a clamp is provided around the extension to allow a diameter of the extension to be reduced to secure the utility member in the opening of the plug.

- 5 4. The assembly of any one of the preceding claims wherein the outer sleeve has a flange around the outer surface of the sidewall adjacent the second end to allow for securing the outer sleeve to the partition of the structure.
- 10 5. The assembly of any one of the preceding claims wherein the partition is a floor which is constructed of concrete and wherein the outer sleeve has a concentric ring around the outer surface of the sidewall adjacent the first end to allow for securely mounting the outer sleeve in the floor.
- 15 6. The assembly of any one of the preceding claims wherein the outer sleeve and inner conduit are constructed as a unitary piece.
- 20 7. The assembly of any one of claims 3 to 6 wherein the plug has a rib around an outer surface such that the rib contacts the inner surface of the sidewall of the inner conduit to secure the plug in the first end of the inner conduit by friction.
- 25 8. The assembly of any one of claims 3 to 7 wherein an inner surface of the opening of the plug has a rib to hold the utility members in place in the opening.
- 30 9. The assembly of any one of the preceding claims wherein an inner diameter of the inner conduit reduces in size from the first and second ends toward a middle of the inner conduit to enable the utility member to be secured in the inner conduit adjacent the middle of the inner conduit.
10. A method for allowing utility members to pass through a floor of a structure while preventing transmission of fire and smoke through the floor of the structure, which comprises the steps of:



Y:\violet\No delete\47229-00.doc

- 5 (a) providing a firestop coupling assembly which includes an outer sleeve having an open first end and an open second end with a sidewall having an outer surface and an inner surface extending therebetween and forming an inner passageway along a longitudinal axis; an inner conduit having an open
10 first end and an open second end with a sidewall having an outer surface and an inner surface extending therebetween and forming an inner passageway having a longitudinal axis, wherein the second end of the inner conduit is mounted in the first end of the outer sleeve such that the longitudinal axis of the outer sleeve is co-axial with the longitudinal axis of the inner conduit; an
15 intumescent material mounted in the inner passageway of the outer sleeve adjacent the second end of the outer sleeve wherein when the intumescent material is heated above a predetermined temperature, the intumescent material expands to fill the inner passageway of the outer sleeve;
- 20 (b) mounting the coupling assembly in the floor of the structure which includes;
- 25 (i) securing the outer sleeve of the coupling assembly at a portion of the partition;
- (ii) providing a cover of the open first end of the inner conduit;
- (iii) placing the cover on the open first end of the inner conduit;
- 30 (iv) pouring concrete around the coupling assembly and allowing the concrete to harden to form the floor; and
- (v) removing the cover wherein when the outer sleeve of the coupling assembly is exposed to heat above a preset temperature, the intumescent material expands to close the inner passageway of the outer sleeve and sealingly expand around the utility members extending through the coupling assembly such that smoke and fire are unable to move past the intumescent material in the inner passageway of the outer sleeve.



Y:\water\No delete\47229-00.doc

11. The method of claim 11 including a plug having at least one opening
extending through the plug and mounted in the first end of the inner conduit to
close the open first end of the inner conduit such that a longitudinal axis of the
opening is parallel to the longitudinal axis of the inner conduit, wherein the plug
has an extension on a first surface of the plug extending outward away from the
inner conduit, wherein the extension surrounds the opening in the plug, wherein
a clamp is provided around the extension to allow a diameter of the extension to
be reduced to secure the utility member in the opening of the plug and wherein
after the plug is inserted into the first end of the inner conduit, the utility member
is inserted through the opening in the plug and the clamp is tightened to secure
the utility member in the opening of the plug.

12. The method of claim 11 or claim 12 wherein a lower conduit is mounted
in the open second end of the outer sleeve and wherein when the outer sleeve
and lower conduit are exposed to heat above a preset temperature, the lower
conduit collapses and the intumescent material expands against the lower
conduit to seal the inner passageway of the outer sleeve such that smoke and
fire can not move past the intumescent material in the inner passageway of the
outer sleeve and can not move through an inner passageway of the lower
conduit.

13. A firestop coupling assembling substantially as herein described with
reference to any one of the accompanying drawings.

14. A method for allowing utility members to pass through a floor of a
structure while preventing the transmission of fire and smoke through the floor
of the structure substantially as herein described with reference to any one of
the accompanying drawings.

DATED: 29 January 2001

PHILLIPS ORMONDE & FITZPATRICK

Attorneys for:

KENNETH R CORNWALL



Y:\winlet\No delete\47229-00.doc

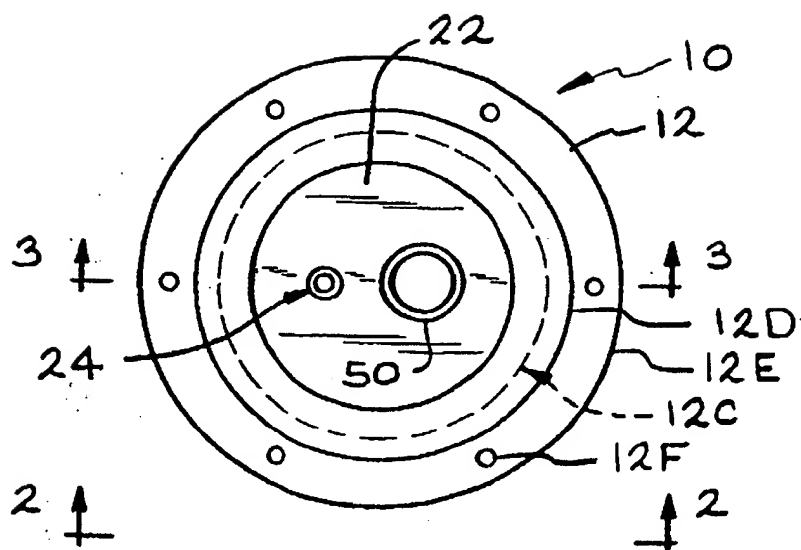


FIG. 1

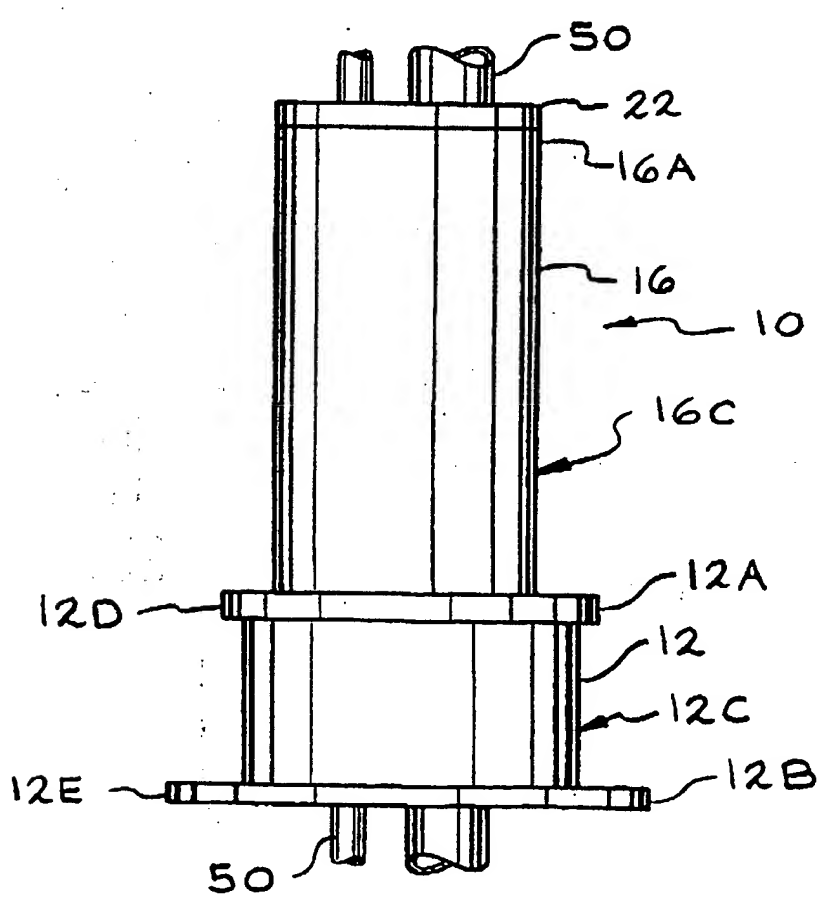


FIG. 2

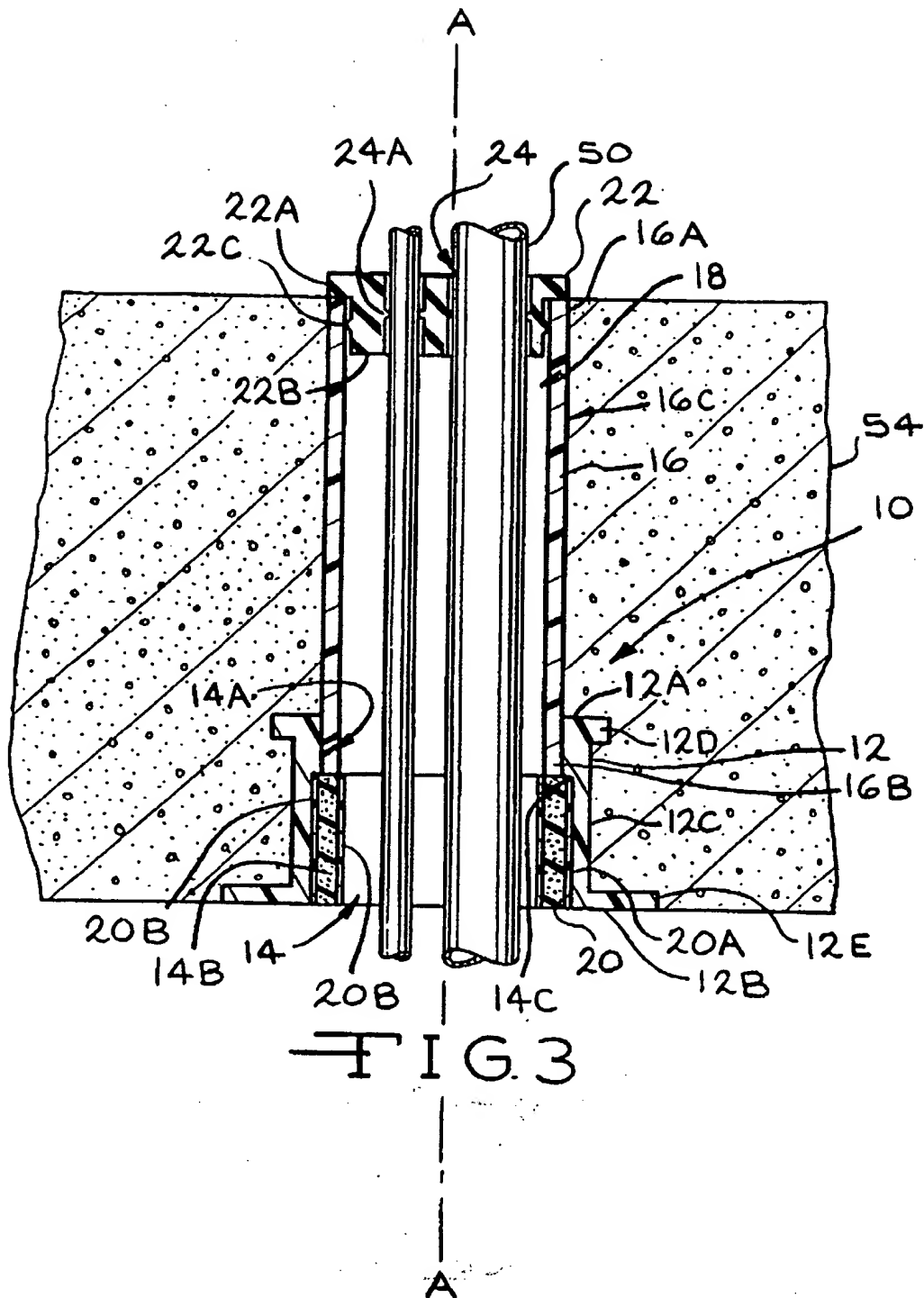


FIG. 3

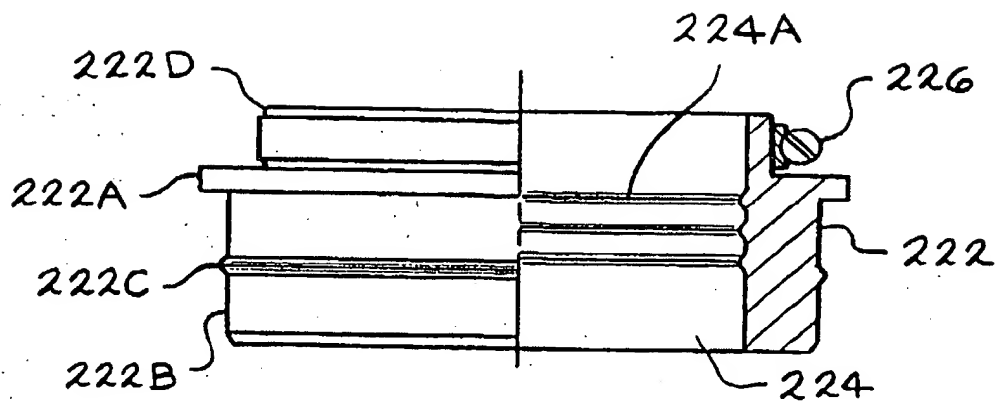


FIG. 4

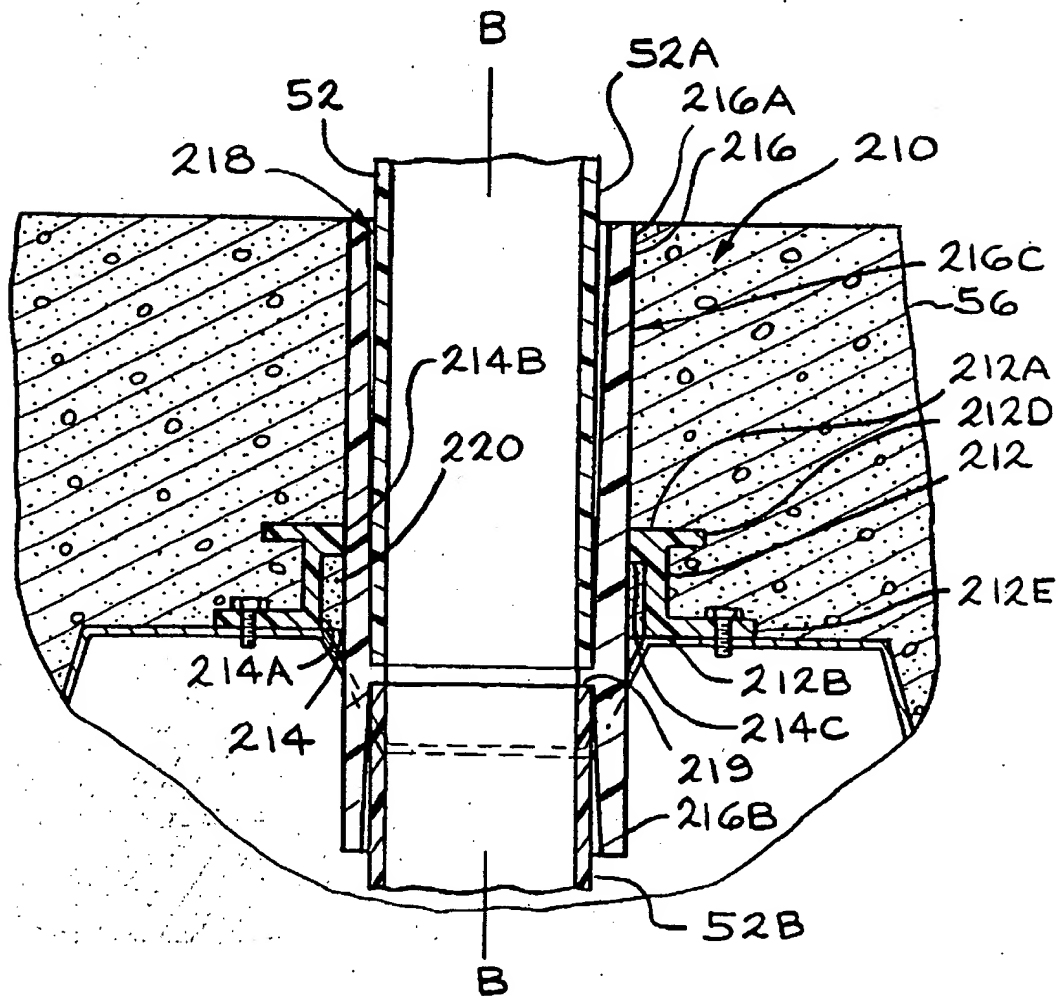


FIG. 6

13 07 00 4723

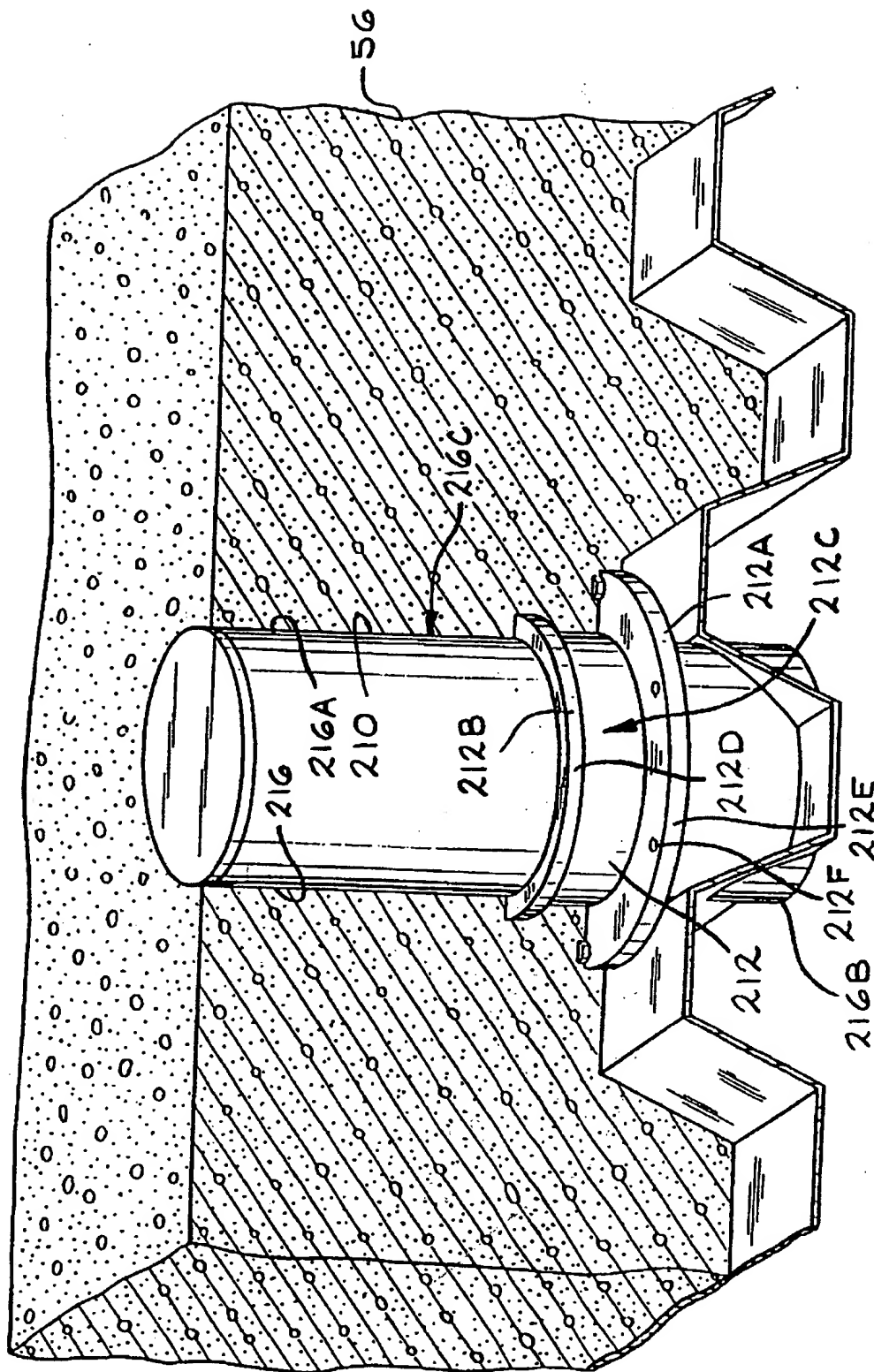


FIG. 5

THIS PAGE BLANK (USPTO)